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Activities of the Department of Public Information: strategic communications services

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report, prepared in response to General Assembly resolution 70/93 B, summarizes the key advances made by the Department of Public Information from September 2015 to February 2016 in promoting the work of the United Nations to the global audience through its strategic communications services.

As part of its strategic communications services subprogramme, which is one of the three subprogrammes of the Department and is implemented by its Strategic Communications Division, the Department develops and implements strategies for communicating United Nations messages on priority issues. The Division also manages the Department's network of more than 60 field offices. As the secretariat for the United Nations Communications Group and its task forces, the Division seeks to strengthen the coordination of communications across the United Nations system.

The activities under the other subprogrammes of the Department, namely, news services and outreach and knowledge services, are described in separate reports of the Secretary-General (A/AC.198/2016/3 and A/AC.198/2016/4, respectively).

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 70/93 B, the General Assembly took note of the reports of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Department of Public Information, submitted for consideration by the Committee on Information at its thirty-eighth session, and requested the Secretary-General to continue to report to the Committee on the activities of the Department.

2. In the same resolution, the General Assembly called upon the Department to provide specific information on a number of its activities. The Bureau of the Committee on Information advised the Department to present the requested information in three parts, in accordance with the three subprogrammes of the Department: strategic communications services, news services and outreach and knowledge services.

3. The present report covers the Department's thematic campaign activities and highlights its strategic approach. Section II of the report contains a summary of the Department's communications campaigns on key issues, and section III discusses the activities of the network of United Nations information centres, including their multilingual work.

4. Unless otherwise indicated, the report covers the activities of the Department during the period from September 2015 to February 2016.

II. Communications campaigns

A. Sustainable development

5. The Department intensified its efforts to raise awareness of sustainable development issues through its "2015: Time for Global Action" campaign. The campaign was particularly important leading up to and during the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda, held in New York from 25 to 27 September 2015, and the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (United Nations Climate Change Conference), held in Paris from 30 November to 11 December. For both events, the Department produced materials and messaging guidance was given to the entire United Nations system. Media coverage of both events was overwhelmingly positive.

6. The Department used the inter-agency task force of the United Nations Communications Group on the Millennium Development Goals and the post-2015 development agenda to coordinate United Nations system activities and messaging with regard to those events.

7. The Department also held regular briefings with the 63 United Nations information centres on a wide range of issues. The centres, in turn, held press briefings and were provided with relevant materials in the six official languages of the United Nations to disseminate to the press and through their own channels. In addition, key United Nations officials such as the Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Assistant Secretary-General on Climate Change of the Executive Office of the Secretary-General briefed information centres and regional

journalists in advance of the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda and the United Nations Climate Change Conference.

8. In January, the Department also developed and launched "17 Goals to Transform Our World", a new campaign to take forward the "2015: Time for Global Action" campaign. The "2015: Time for Global Action" website was updated with a new visual identity, and promotional materials will continue to be produced throughout 2016. The United Nations sustainable development website (www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment) will continue to be the main site regarding the Sustainable Development Goals.

Summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda

9. The Department led communication efforts before, during and after the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda and worked closely with the United Nations system, civil society and other external partners to amplify and coordinate messaging, social media products and media outreach with respect to that agenda, including the Sustainable Development Goals. The "2015: Time for Global Action" website was the main platform for the summit, and the Department produced various multimedia materials, including videos, images and graphics, to promote the summit and the issues before it in all official languages. The reach with regard to the event was global and broke records on the main United Nations social media accounts while garnering unprecedented media coverage of key United Nations messages.

10. United Nations information centres organized numerous events prior to the summit and will continue to create awareness of the 17 Goals in the coming years. Activities ranged from briefings and the production of multimedia materials and press conferences to media monitoring. The Information Centre in Algiers and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), for example, contributed to the launch of the "Radio Everyone" project, aimed at promoting the Sustainable Development Goals.

11. The Information Centre in Canberra and OzHarvest, a key partner of the United Nations Environment Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, organized an event on the "Think.Eat.Save" campaign at Parliament House in Canberra, drawing attention to a new plan by the Minister for the Environment of Australia to establish a "national food waste 2025" strategy.

12. All information centres highlighted the Sustainable Development Goals in their briefings to students. The Information Centre in Ankara addressed more than 300 students at a Model United Nations meeting held at Turgut Özal University, while the Information Centre in Prague sponsored a two-day workshop on the post-2015 development agenda organized by the non-governmental organization Slovo 21 for a group of young Roma leaders. The Information Centre in Bogotá, together with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Colombia and local universities, organized several academic forums on the Sustainable Development Goals, while the Information Centre in La Paz and the youth organization Siembra Juventud organized the Fourth Youth Congress, on the theme "Uncensored", at the Private University of Santa Cruz de la Sierra. As part of the event, the Resident Representatives of UNDP, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women)

and the United Nations Volunteers Programme briefed 500 students from Argentina, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Chile, Colombia, New Zealand and Peru on the Sustainable Development Goals and the work of the United Nations.

13. The Information Centre in Nairobi organized a press briefing for 70 journalists by the Resident Coordinator, while the Benelux and France/Monaco desks of the United Nations Regional Information Centre in Brussels wrote 17 articles highlighting the 17 Goals and posted them on social media accounts.

14. At United Nations Headquarters, the Information Centres Service organized a series of WebEx sessions to brief information centres and local media on the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda.

Climate change

15. The Department played a key role in communications planning, message development and media and constituency outreach for the United Nations Climate Change Conference. The Department helped to build support for and inform the public about the Paris agreement. Throughout the Conference, the Department worked closely with the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Secretary-General's climate change team and the Office of the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General to ensure that all information and messaging were coordinated and published in a timely manner. This tight teamwork was especially important during the Conference, which attracted unprecedented media attention. The Department was granted unparalleled access to the Secretary-General to document his role during the Conference. This was reflected in in-depth social media coverage as well as video and news products. On Snapchat, for example, a piece of content featuring the Secretary-General received 5 million views in one day. Social media content was also used by regular media in their live reporting from Paris.

16. United Nations field offices were central to the Department's efforts to raise awareness about the United Nations Climate Change Conference and climate change in general. The United Nations Regional Information Centre in Brussels provided support for the Conference in Paris and took the lead in organizing many activities to raise awareness about it. It devoted several Ciné-ONU monthly film screenings and panel discussions to climate change, while its desk for Nordic countries co-organized, with the European Union Information Centre, the French Embassy in Reykjavik, the Environment Agency of Iceland and two non-governmental organizations, a photo contest on the effects of climate change in Iceland.

17. The United Nations Information Centre in Ankara addressed more than 10,000 participants from several European countries at the World Environment Day Intercontinental Cycling Tour, organized by the Turkish Cyclists' Association and supported by the United Nations system, the delegation of the European Union to Turkey, and local municipalities.

B. Special Information Programme on the Question of Palestine

18. As part of the General Assembly-mandated Special Information Programme on the Question of Palestine, the Department hosted its annual training programme for Palestinian journalists from 16 November to 18 December, to strengthen the skills

and capacities of young Palestinian journalists. It also sought to expose Palestinian journalists to the work of the United Nations, especially various activities and programmes affecting the lives of the people in the region. Ten Palestinian media practitioners participated in the exercise, bringing the total number of journalists benefiting from the training programme to 171.

19. The training programme included four weeks at United Nations Headquarters and one week in Washington, D.C. The group was briefed by a number of senior United Nations officials from the Department, the Department of Political Affairs, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and the Information Centre in Washington, D.C. They met with the Secretary-General and the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations, as well as with government officials from the Department of State and the Senate of the United States of America. While at Headquarters, the journalists attended meetings of the General Assembly and the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and participated in the observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

20. The programme also made extensive use of the unique opportunities offered by New York and Washington, D.C., as global hubs for journalism and digital communications to connect the group with industry leaders (including Al Jazeera English, the British Broadcasting Corporation, BuzzFeed, National Public Radio, Twitter and YouTube), academic institutions (Columbia and Georgetown Universities), think tanks and non-governmental organizations.

21. In parallel, the trainees worked through an intensive curriculum taught by a team of seasoned media experts. At the end of the programme, the group produced three multimedia projects about the lives of Palestinian refugees belonging to three generations. The projects are available online at https://dpimediatraining.wordpress.com/.

22. The Department worked with the Department of Political Affairs, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and UNRWA to provide communications support for the 2015 observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People (29 November), which was held at United Nations Headquarters on 23 November and included a special meeting by the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and a photo exhibit in the Visitors Lobby. United Nations information centres and offices around the world also organized a number of activities in commemoration of the International Day in Algiers, Ankara, Cairo, Canberra, Dakar, Dar es Salaam (United Republic of Tanzania), Geneva, Jakarta, Nairobi, Ouagadougou, Prague, Pretoria, Tehran and Vienna.

C. Human rights

23. The Department promoted the work of the Organization on a range of human rights issues. For Human Rights Day (10 December), it worked closely with OHCHR to promote a campaign entitled "Our Rights. Our Freedoms. Always.", highlighting the theme of the four freedoms: freedom from fear, freedom of speech, freedom of worship and freedom from want. The Human Rights Day website received more than 145,000 unique page views in the six official languages during

the month of December. The related social media campaign attracted an exceptionally high level of interest on Twitter.

24. The Department also participated in and provided promotional support for two Human Rights Day events organized by OHCHR in New York: a panel discussion on the Human Rights Up Front initiative and a special event held in Four Freedoms Park on Roosevelt Island.

25. Around the world, events and outreach activities were organized by United Nations information centres in many cities, including Antananarivo, Brazzaville, Dakar, Dhaka, Islamabad, Lagos (Nigeria), Lusaka, Moscow, Port of Spain and Tehran.

26. For the first International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and of the Prevention of this Crime (9 December), the Department worked closely with the Office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide to create a visual identity and website in the six official languages, and engaged in outreach to non-governmental organizations and the press and on social media. A press conference given by the Special Adviser on 8 December generated significant media coverage, including by the Associated Press, *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, Deutsche Welle, EFE and *Foreign Policy*.

27. For the International Decade for People of African Descent, the Department produced a booklet in English and Spanish providing an overview of the Decade. It will be published online and printed in the other four official languages, as well as Portuguese, over the course of 2016. The Department produced an exhibit displayed at the United Nations conference building from 11 to 22 January, co-sponsored by OHCHR, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the United States Permanent Mission to the United Nations. The Department also co-sponsored two panel discussions on racism against people of African descent (on 16 September and 3 November) in collaboration with OHCHR, UNESCO, the Permanent Mission of Brazil to the United Nations and external partners, including Black Lives Matter and the Unitarian Universalist Association.

28. United Nations information centres supported the International Decade through awareness-raising of the realities faced by people of African descent and their contributions to the societies in which they live, under the central theme "People of African descent: recognition, justice and development".

29. The International Decade was officially launched in Brazil during the Afro-Latin American and Afro-Caribbean Women's Festival in Brasilia with the presentation of the official web page produced by the Information Centre in Rio de Janeiro. The Centre, in cooperation with 10 United Nations agencies, produced a 30-minute animation spot for broadcast by television stations. In addition, the Centre supported several events related to the International Decade, including the organization of "Fashion Inclusive Brazil", a multi-ethnic fashion event highlighting the work of national and international designers and focused on African fashion. The Centre also provided support for the International Festival and Tenth World Games of Capoeira, organized by the non-governmental organization ABADÁ-Capoeira, with more than 5,000 athletes competing. The event was opened with a round table on the Decade.

30. The United Nations office in Tbilisi and the Universal Peace Federation, in cooperation with the United Nations youth representative of Georgia, organized the

event "Days of Africa in Georgia". Various universities and schools from across the country participated, organizing some 15 briefings on African culture and history and on the lives of people of African descent in Georgia and the challenges that they face.

31. The Information Centre in Tokyo produced a *UN in Action* video with Japanese subtitles, *Descendants of Slaves: Ancestral Land*, regarding the Gullah Geechee people in the states of South Carolina and Georgia in the United States. A special preview of the movie *Selma* was held with the film distributor Gaga. The guest speaker was Ariana Miyamoto, winner of the Miss Universe Japan 2015 pageant and the first mixed-race beauty pageant winner in Japan.

32. The Department participated in the development of a communications component for the United Nations system-wide action plan aimed at ensuring a coherent approach to achieving the objectives of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which was finalized by the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues in October.

33. The Department promoted the fiftieth anniversary of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, with the Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information moderating a panel discussion on the topic "Introducing tolerance on the Internet" on 2 December.

34. The Department worked with OHCHR to organize a press conference and promote a special event on the protection of the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people in Latin America on 20 November, featuring the launch of a new music video by Brazilian singer Daniela Mercury. The event was promoted throughout Latin America with the help of United Nations information centres in the region.

35. In close consultation with the Treaty Section of the Office of Legal Affairs, the Department promoted the Section's annual treaty event (28 September to 1 October) by means of opening and closing press releases as well as daily updates, highlighting 70 years of multilateral treaty-making and the 31 treaty actions taken during the event.

D. New Partnership for Africa's Development

36. As part of United Nations-coordinated efforts to generate support for economic development, peace and security in Africa, the Department, through its magazine, *Africa Renewal/Afrique Renouveau*, and the Africa Renewal Online website, in both English and French, continued to promote and publicize the aims, priorities and achievements of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) Planning and Coordinating Agency, working in close collaboration with the Agency and the NEPAD African Peer Review Mechanism as well as with the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA).

37. In October, the Department organized the annual media breakfast round table with the Chief Executive Officer of the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency on the theme "Innovative solutions to job creation for Africa's youth". The event provided an opportunity for the Chief Executive Officer to interact with the media

regarding the priorities and achievements of NEPAD and the challenges it faces in its efforts to boost Africa's economic development, in particular regional infrastructure. The Department also organized various media events and activities to mark the annual Africa Week held on the margins of the special debate of the General Assembly on Africa's development. It produced and disseminated information products highlighting the achievements of the Agency and organized a press conference and interviews for senior officials from the Agency, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa and the African Peer Review Mechanism. Several high-level events were held on thematic issues such as the synergies between the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the African Union Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want; the role of African regional economic communities in facilitating regional integration; gender; and youth. As part of its outreach efforts, the Department developed a special in-focus web page on its website (http://www.un.org/africarenewal/) entitled "Africa at the United Nations General Assembly", featuring regular updates, including official speeches, statements and activities of African leaders during the 2015 general debate of the Assembly.

38. In November, the Department continued its collaboration with the African Union in the production and publication of the Union's regular newsletter through the provision of technical and editorial assistance. The focus of the upcoming edition is on Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, in particular the rights of women. The Sustainable Development Goals were the main theme of the December 2015 edition of *Africa Renewal/Afrique Renouveau*. The issue included interviews with the former Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on Post-2015 Development Planning; the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Africa; the Executive Secretary of ECA; and the Chief Executive Officer of the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency. The magazine also reviewed 15 years of the implementation of the eight Millennium Development Goals and published profiles of the first winners of the United Nations Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela Prize: Jorge Sampaio, former President of Portugal, and Helena Ndume, a Namibian eye surgeon.

39. During 2015, the syndicated news features service of *Africa Renewal/Afrique Renouveau*, continued to grow. Between September 2015 and January 2016, some 20 of the magazine's articles were republished in both English and French 160 times in 83 media outlets in Africa and around the world, including in France, Ghana, Italy, Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States. The results of the media outreach show the breadth of the Department's efforts to reach audiences around the world.

40. The Department continued to strengthen its public awareness programmes on Africa, focusing on the region's development achievements and challenges and the results of its partnership with the United Nations, in particular with regard to such issues as the Sustainable Development Goals and climate change. In response to increasing reader interest in stories on Africa that are not usually covered by mainstream media, the Department produced and disseminated more original content through its social media platforms than in the preceding year, on themes that included the fight against the Ebola virus, the Sustainable Development Goals, climate change, gender and peace and security, as well as regional integration and infrastructure development.

41. Social media accounts continued to see steady growth. For example, as shown in the table below, the number of followers on the magazine's Twitter accounts rose by 58 per cent with respect to French and 27 per cent with respect to English between December 2014 and December 2015.

Platform	*As of December 2014*	*As of December 2015*	*Percentage increase*
Twitter (number of followers):			
@africarenewal	64 100	81 800	27
@ONUAfrique	31 200	49 300	58
Facebook (number of likes):			
Africa Renewal	5 452	6 145	13
Afrique Renouveau	2 562	2 802	09

42. Similar growth rates were also registered in the number of subscribers to the Department's magazine e-newsletter, which provides a brief overview of new content on the Africa Renewal website and is sent primarily to African journalists and media outlets.

E. United Nations peacekeeping operations

43. The Department continued its close cooperation with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Field Support and the Department of Political Affairs to promote and support United Nations peace operations, including through participation in the work of various thematic and country-specific integrated task forces and working groups led by the Department of Peacekeeping and the Department of Political Affairs on Afghanistan, Burundi, the Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Iraq, Nigeria, Libya, Mali, Somalia, South Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen as well as the regions of the Middle East and the Sahel.

44. With regard to the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic, the Department continued to work with United Nations partners across the system both at Headquarters and in the region to promote better and wider understanding of the political efforts of the United Nations and its humanitarian response in the Syrian Arab Republic and neighbouring countries, including by taking part in regular meetings of the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Syrian Crisis, led by the Department of Political Affairs; the Syrian working group on protection issues, chaired by the Department of Political Affairs; the weekly videoconferences chaired by the Department of Political Affairs; the United Nations Communications Group; and the meeting on protection issues held in Beirut in October, chaired by the Department of Political Affairs and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, as well as by working with the Office of the Special Envoy on Syria to plan for the talks between Syrian parties.

45. To coordinate messaging and communications on the Syrian Arab Republic, the Department set up a communications group with relevant communication offices within the United Nations system. The Department continued to issue the weekly public information product "Syrian Crisis: United Nations Response", designed as a

reference and guidance tool that provides a snapshot of the latest United Nations activities to address the Syrian crisis.

46. With regard to the situation in Yemen, the Department brought together a system-wide communications team to ensure that messages were being coordinated. The Department provided support to the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen on communications issues, including by disseminating statements, setting up the Special Envoy's office website and using its multimedia and social media platforms during the talks held in Geneva between the Government of Yemen and rebels in December.

47. Since the crisis in Burundi began, the Department has participated in the meetings of the Crisis Management Support Team and meetings on communications regarding Burundi to ensure consistent messaging. The Department has facilitated international media coverage of United Nations efforts to address the crisis, including by widely disseminating all relevant statements by United Nations officials to the major international media outlets covering events in Burundi. On its news platforms, the Department also provided multimedia coverage of the visit of the Security Council to Burundi in January, through the assistance of the Information Centre in Bujumbura.

48. The Department temporarily deployed a communications and public information officer to South Sudan for six weeks in November and December to support the communications needs of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan owing to the shortage of public information staff at the Mission.

49. The Department provided communications support to the Department of Peacekeeping Operations for the Leaders' Summit on Peacekeeping, held during the general debate of the General Assembly. This included facilitating live streaming of the event, developing and promoting a web page and social media content, and organizing a press briefing for Latin American journalists on the pledges received from the region.

50. The Department continued to lead the work of the web editorial board that it shares with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Field Support and the Department of Political Affairs on developing a new web platform for field missions. The board met regularly to agree on approach, design, functionality and a roll-out plan and to develop guidance and training materials for missions. From September to December, an additional six missions were trained and went live on the new platform, enhancing their capacity for digital communications.

51. Department staff members from Headquarters and the field, working in cooperation with peacekeeping operations in the Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Cyprus, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Mali, Liberia, South Sudan and the Sudan, engaged in outreach to media in troop- and police-contributing countries on more than 34 occasions, targeting some 23 individual countries.

52. The Department, in close collaboration with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, continued to co-manage the United Nations peacekeeping website in all six official languages (http://www.un.org/peacekeeping). The joint web editorial board met regularly to cover a variety of issues relating to maintenance of the website and its further development to improve the quality of visual and content presentation, as well as enhanced use of social media platforms. Additionally, the

board continued to plan short-term online campaigns to ensure that the homepage remained up to date with dynamic content.

53. In October, the Department worked closely with UN-Women and the Permanent Missions of Spain and the United Kingdom to promote the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security.

F. Ebola

54. The Department continued to provide strategic communications support and media handling for the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Ebola by developing and distributing core messaging and media lines for the United Nations system and partners; coordinating United Nations communications; maintaining the bilingual Global Ebola Response website; handling media relations, including by setting up press briefings and media interviews; compiling and disseminating media monitoring and analysis reports; and providing technical assistance in the production and publication of a number of reports on Ebola issued by the Special Envoy. The Department also advised the World Health Organization on its reform efforts, including by participating in a lessons-learned workshop on communications.

G. Counter-terrorism

55. Working closely with the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force Office, the Department promoted the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and provided communications support to the Task Force and its working groups. The Department also supported the Task Force and the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre in the development of their redesigned websites. It also provided communications support for the launch of the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism and worked with the Task Force's Working Group on Supporting and Highlighting Victims of Terrorism.

56. In addition, the Department worked closely with the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate to promote its work, including through the distribution of two op-eds on foreign terrorist fighters that were placed in the media by information centres and by organizing the interviews of the Executive Director with French media in October.

H. Disarmament

57. The Department worked with the Office for Disarmament Affairs and the Permanent Mission of Kazakhstan to promote the International Day against Nuclear Tests, observed in September. For both that International Day and the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, the Department assisted in updating the corresponding websites. The Department also provided support to the Office for Disarmament Affairs for its "Poster for Peace" contest, including by promoting it to the media and through the United Nations information centres and the United Nations Academic Impact network.

I. Migration

58. The Department worked with the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on International Migration and Development, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Organization for Migration to raise awareness of and promote the high-level meeting on migration and refugee movements held during the seventieth session of the General Assembly. The Department set up interviews with senior United Nations officials, including the Deputy Secretary-General, and widely distributed the remarks of the Secretary-General and other officials. The Department also widely promoted the meeting of the Secretary-General with refugees on his visit to Italy and other countries.

J. Zero-tolerance policy on sexual abuse

59. The Department continued to work closely with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support as well as with peacekeeping operations to promote and explain the Secretary-General's zero-tolerance policy regarding sexual exploitation and abuse to populations in countries where peacekeepers are deployed. The Department also assisted the Department of Field Support in updating its website on sexual exploitation and abuse and held WebEx briefings on the zero-tolerance policy with the public information components of peacekeeping operations.

K. Social media

60. The Department continued to employ social media networks to promote major United Nations news, report launches and communications materials; correct inaccuracies about the work of the United Nations; interact with social media followers; and provide behind-the-scenes glimpses of the work of the Organization. It is estimated that across the major global platforms, including Facebook, Flickr, Google Plus, Instagram, Tumblr, Twitter, VK, WeChat, Weibo and YouTube, United Nations messages are seen by more than 12 million people on a daily basis. The use of these interactive platforms broadens the reach of the messages of the United Nations and contributes to the overall transparency and accountability of the Organization.

61. The Department continued to lead a Secretariat-wide process to draft policies for the institutional and personal use of social media. It also disseminated guidance documents, organized informational events on social media topics and themes, and played a leading role in the coordination of social media initiatives in the system.

62. Between July and December, the number of followers of the main United Nations Twitter account in English increased steadily; the account currently has more than 6 million followers. Some of the most popular topics posted on the Organization's English-language Twitter account in the second half of 2015, as measured by the number of shares, likes and comments, were the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda; the visit of Pope Francis to United Nations Headquarters in New York; the United Nations responses to the migrant and refugee crisis in Europe and to violent extremism; the

culmination of the campaign to celebrate the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations ("UN 70" campaign); the crises in the Central African Republic, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen; and the question of Palestine. Similar results were seen on the English-language Facebook and Google Plus accounts, which together have more than 6 million fans. The Department continued to see impressive growth on its Instagram account, with a threefold increase in the number of followers, from 174,000 during the previous reporting period in 2015 to 550,000 followers during the reporting period. It also launched a Snapchat account, a visual platform that is especially popular among young people.

63. The Department continued to discuss ways to increase the timely multilingual creation of content optimized for digital platforms. The General Assembly decided not to approve the resources for expanding the multilingual capacity of the Department set out in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017 (see resolution 70/247). While the Department will continue to make efforts to increase its multilingual output within existing resources, the decision has an impact on its capacity to undertake activities in additional languages.

III. Information Centres Service

A. Multilingualism

64. The global network of United Nations information centres continues to communicate with local audiences in their languages and idioms. Currently, in addition to working in five of the six official United Nations languages, information centres publish information materials in 63 local languages.[1] The centres, on a regular basis, prepare and often translate into local languages press releases or summaries thereof, press kits, fact sheets and other information materials and content from Headquarters, the United Nations system or meetings of United Nations bodies.

65. Of the 61 information centre websites, 30 use local languages, and social media are increasingly being used by the centres to disseminate information, including in local languages. As many as 49 information centres have Facebook accounts, 15 of which are in local languages; 40 centres have Twitter accounts, 23 of which are in local languages; and 29 centres have YouTube accounts, 8 of which are in local languages. Information centres also use other social media platforms, such as Google Plus, Vimeo, Instagram, Tumblr, Flickr, Pinterest, Flipboard, LinkedIn, Telegram, SMS and VKontakte, the most popular social platform in the Russian Federation.

66. Information centres produced newsletters in 15 languages on a weekly, monthly, bimonthly or quarterly basis.

[1] Armenian, Azerbaijani, Bafut, Bahasa Indonesia, Bangla/Bengali, Bangwa, Basaa, Belarusian, Bemba, Czech, Danish, Dioula, Dutch, Ewondo, Finnish, Fulfulde, Georgian, German, Gonja, Greek, Hausa, Hindi, Hungarian, Icelandic, Igbo, Italian, Japanese, Kaounde, Kazakh, Kirundi, Kiswahili, Kituba, Lingala, Lozi, Lunda, Luvale, Malagasy, Moore, Ndebele, Norwegian, Nyanja, Oshiwambo, Persian, Pidgin English, Polish, Portuguese, Shona, Shupamu, Sinhala, Slovak, Slovene, Sotho, Swedish, Tamil, Tongan, Tswana, Turkish, Ukrainian, Urdu, Uzbek, Wolof, Yoruba and Zulu.

67. The Information Centre in Moscow translated into Russian the latest version of *Basic Facts about the United Nations* and, with the support of the United Nations country team in the Russian Federation and the United Nations office in Tajikistan, published 3,000 copies of the book. An electronic edition was posted on the website of the Centre and circulated among the United Nations offices in the Commonwealth of Independent States.

68. To ensure that a wider number of people around the world are aware of the Sustainable Development Goals and to enable them to take action in an informed manner, some 18 information centres reproduced the Sustainable Development Goals icons in 29 local languages.[2]

69. Other United Nations publications and promotional materials were produced or translated into local languages, including *Basic Facts about the United Nations* and "COP21 — Frequently Asked Questions", which was translated into Urdu by the Information Centre in Islamabad; and the UN 70 Everyday Card, which was translated into Bemba, Kaounde, Lozi, Lunda, Luvale, Nyanja and Tongan by the Information Centre in Lusaka.

B. Enhanced engagement with youth

70. In response to the Secretary-General's call for a greater focus on youth, United Nations information centres have enhanced their engagement with young people. Information centres continued to use digital communication tools, including social media platforms and mobile telephones, to reach a wider and younger audience in a timely and effective manner. At an event organized by the United Nations Regional Information Centre in Brussels, the Secretary-General engaged youth on the post-2015 development agenda using the Twitter hashtag #AskBanKimoon, which was viewed 9.8 million times and allowed online youth participation from around the world.

71. The Information Centre in Cairo, in coordination with the other information centres in the region, organized the first online youth engagement with the League of Arab States and partnered with regional offices of UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP, the World Food Programme and UN-Women to reach as many young people as possible. In the first 28 days, more than 14,000 young people across 19 Arab countries participated in the #Mostakbalna ("our future") initiative, with a focus on the Sustainable Development Goals. Youth in the region engaged online about their priorities, concerns and recommendations.

72. On 24 November, the centre hosted a round-table discussion with key figures from the United Nations, the League of Arab States, civil society, academia and media that was streamed and tweeted live on YouTube, Facebook and Twitter, with questions on the #Mostakbalna social media platforms. Total impressions and engaged users were 294,000 and 5,500, respectively, on Facebook and Twitter.

73. On #WorldYouthSkillsDay, the United Nations office in Tashkent produced a trailer for its new initiative, *If I Were You...*, a minute-long message of wisdom from "top names" in Uzbekistan to the "top names to be" in the country. Entrepreneurs,

[2] Armenian, Bafut, Bahasa Indonesia, Bangla/Bengali, Bangwa, Basaa, Czech, Dioula, Dutch, Ewondo, Fulfulde, Georgian, German, Greek, Hausa, Hindi, Igbo, Italian, Japanese, Kiswahili, Moore, Persian, Pidgin English, Polish, Portuguese, Shupamu, Twi, Turkish and Yoruba.

business leaders and other successful people gave short interviews about the secrets of their success and shared their own experiences, knowledge and advice with youth.

74. The Information Centre in Windhoek, in collaboration with *The Namibian* newspaper, hosted a Twitter chat using #AskTheUN on poverty eradication and the role of youth; six heads of United Nations agencies participated in the live session.

75. The information centres also continued their outreach to young people through traditional activities, including Model United Nations programmes, briefings and essay and art contests.

C. Seventieth anniversary of the United Nations

76. United Nations information centres, working in partnership with Governments, the United Nations system, civil society, educational institutions and media, organized nearly 1,000 activities to mark the seventieth anniversary of the Organization during 2015. Activities included indoor and outdoor exhibitions, workshops, media training sessions and briefings, official commemorations, social media campaigns, sports events, competitions, concerts and Model United Nations events.

77. On United Nations Day 2015, and in the lead-up to it, the global network reached almost 120,000 people and visited nearly 2,900 schools as part of the United Nations Works for You programme. Millions of others received the United Nations message through social media campaigns, television and radio interviews, newspaper articles and instant messaging (SMS).

78. Among the myriad anniversary events was the one held at the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow from 25 to 30 October, which included a welcoming address by the President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin. The programme also included short ballet pieces staged by choreographer Alexei Ratmansky as well as a screening of a "UN 70" documentary produced by the Russian News Agency TASS and the Russia 24 television channel.

79. The focus of the observance of the anniversary by the United Nations office in Minsk was a unique initiative with the Government of Belarus, the "UN 70 Belarus Express for Sustainable Development Goals". The initiative involved a special train travelling across all regions of Belarus from 23 to 30 October, with more than 250 activities on "UN 70" and the Sustainable Development Goals carried out with government officials, parliamentarians, regional governors, civil society and private sector partners, students, journalists, religious leaders of all faiths, artists, celebrities, representatives of vulnerable groups and various United Nations agencies.

80. As part of a series of "UN 70" activities, the Information Centre in New Delhi collaborated with partners in the cities of Kolkata and Thiruvananthapuram in organizing academic seminars on such topics as United Nations reform and a global partnership towards peace, development and human rights. The Centre also partnered with the Kerala Football Association and the Eram Group in organizing an under-15 state-level football tournament called the UN 70 Cup.

81. In Mexico City, 5 million subway tickets carried the "UN 70" logo, while Capital Bus displayed the anniversary logo and the United Nations flag on 10 of its tourist buses. Moviegoers to the country's largest cinema network, Cinépolis, saw a one-minute *UN 70* video before each movie shown in its theatres.

82. The Information Centre in Lagos led its United Nations Day celebrations with a series of events including outreach to schools in the North Central region, reaching 2,500 secondary school students. Meanwhile, more than 2,000 secondary schools throughout Algeria participated in a history lesson on the United Nations as part of the country's "UN 70" commemoration. The Information Centre in Algiers worked closely with the Ministry of Education of Algeria in the preparation of the course, which is now part of the curriculum.

83. The Information Centre in Ouagadougou coordinated an exhibition of books and information materials about "UN 70" and the Sustainable Development Goals, which received more than 12,000 visitors. The Centre, in partnership with the University of Ouagadougou, gave lectures about "UN 70" at 10 high schools in Ouagadougou and Bobo-Dioulasso, reaching 4,900 students. A United Nations Day SMS message reading "UN 70: a stronger UN for a better world" was sent to 3 million people.

84. Some 20,000 visitors came to the Palais des Nations, the historic home of the League of Nations and the current seat of the United Nations Office at Geneva, to partake in the festivities marking "UN 70". The Open Day, organized by the Office, brought together more than 40 Permanent Missions and 25 United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, as well as 20 staff associations and non-governmental organizations.

D. "Turn the World UN Blue" global campaign

85. On United Nations Day (24 October), more than 350 iconic landmarks and 20 United Nations offices in 91 countries participated in the "Turn the World UN Blue" campaign, in which landmarks were lit up in blue. The campaign saw unprecedented engagement by Governments and ministries, United Nations country offices and partner organizations globally. United Nations information centres played a central role, mobilizing the participation of 328 landmark sites in 57 countries. Landmarks included the Sydney Opera House in Australia; the Great Pyramid of Giza in Egypt; the statue of Christ the Redeemer in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; the Empire State Building in New York; the Great Wall of China; the ancient city of Petra in Jordan; the Leaning Tower of Pisa in Italy; Edinburgh Castle and Central Hall Westminster in the United Kingdom; Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus in India; the temples at Baalbek in Lebanon; the Tokyo SkyTree in Japan; Borobudur in Indonesia; Table Mountain in South Africa; the Meroë pyramids in the Sudan; and the Alhambra in Spain, among many others.

86. The centres were also instrumental in translating the "Turn the World UN Blue" campaign and press materials into local languages and helping to promote the campaign through traditional and social media. The response on social media surpassed all expectations. More than 700 photos were contributed by information centres, partners, Governments and the staff at the landmarks. They were uploaded to the United Nations Flickr album by the Department's social media team,

generating more than 44,000 views. #UN Blue images and messages reached more than 60 million accounts on Twitter, with tweets originating from 160 countries.

87. Traditional media coverage of "Turn the World UN Blue" and "UN 70" activities was also extensive, generating 1,300 television, radio, newspaper and online items during the week of 24 October, while other "UN 70" activities in October were covered in an additional 1,300 media reports.

E. Cooperation with United Nations entities at the country level

88. United Nations information centres, through United Nations communication groups and United Nations country team thematic groups, organized outreach activities to raise awareness of key United Nations issues. The centres also worked with United Nations country teams to devise joint communication strategies, guided by the "Communicating as one" concept. A recently conducted survey with the information centres found that joint communications and coordination were strong with respect to observances of international days and Model United Nations and Millennium Development Goals-related events. The promotion of the Sustainable Development Goals provides a good platform for bringing together the members of United Nations country teams, strengthening the potential for joint public outreach activities led by information centres.

89. Information centres also worked closely with United Nations country teams in the context of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework through the development of communications strategies, media support, the organization of briefings and video production. For example, the United Nations office in Tashkent, in cooperation with the United Nations country team and the Ministry of Economy of Uzbekistan, organized the launching ceremony for the Framework programme for the period 2016-2020, while the Information Centre in Mexico City produced a video about the results of the Framework in 2015.

90. The Information Centre in Beirut, in coordination with the United Nations system in Lebanon and JGROUP, a regional group that incorporates 38 companies working in media, publishing and advertising and located throughout the Middle East and North Africa, the United Kingdom and the United States, launched a 70-day media campaign on the theme "UN: 70 Years for Lebanon".

91. The Information Centre in Yaoundé and the United Nations country team in Cameroon jointly organized, with the Ministry of External Relations of Cameroon, a mini-football tournament and a basketball game with more than 350 spectators, while the Information Centre in Pretoria coordinated the participation of the United Nations in South Africa at the annual Diplomatic Fair, which was organized by the Department of International Relations and Cooperation of South Africa to showcase the cultures of diplomatic missions and organizations, and was attended by 2,000 people.

F. Raising awareness of high-level United Nations meetings as mandated by the General Assembly

92. The Department, though its information centres, continues to publicize the work of the General Assembly. The Information Centre in Brazzaville organized a

media encounter regarding the seventieth session of the Assembly that featured a senior government official as a key speaker, while the centres in Dar es Salaam, Dhaka, Harare and La Paz highlighted the work of the Assembly in Model United Nations programmes.

93. The Information Centre in Ouagadougou organized, with the participation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Burkina Faso, a media briefing for 50 journalists on issues at stake at the seventieth session of the General Assembly and held a workshop for 60 staff members of various ministries on the outcomes of the sixty-ninth session.

94. At United Nations Headquarters, an open-hour WebEx session was organized between the information centres and the Spokesperson for the President of the General Assembly at its seventieth session, who gave a briefing on the President's priorities for the session and highlighted events and meetings in 2015 and 2016. The information centres also placed the President's 2015 end-of-year op-ed, entitled "The transformation to a more sustainable and just world begins now", in more than 40 media outlets and provided media support to the President when he travelled to countries in which they serve. For the President's visit to Jordan and the United Arab Emirates in January 2016, for example, the information centres in Beirut and Manama arranged for media interviews with outlets including Sky News Arabia, Al Arabiya, *The Jordan Times* and the Jordan News Agency. Jordan Radio and Television, Al Jazeera, Reuters and AP covered the President's visit to the Zaatari refugee camp.

G. Cooperation with the Office of the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General

95. Cooperation between the United Nations information centres and the Office of the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General has strengthened over the years. For example, in an effort to increase the centres' efficiency and responsiveness in providing communications support for the Secretary-General's visits and for expanding media coverage, an interactive WebEx session was organized with the Spokesperson to brief the centres on expectations. In addition to providing extensive media and logistical support, information centres were encouraged to propose media and public opportunities for the greatest media impact.

H. Strengthening and capacity-building of United Nations information centres

96. The Department continued to strengthen the support provided by Headquarters to the network of information centres, through a more coordinated approach aimed at enhancing and enriching their efforts.

Use of WebEx

97. The Department, through the Information Centres Service, continued to provide its strategic support to its field offices through increased use of WebEx, a web-based videoconferencing tool. In 2015, the Department organized 69 live briefings with the network of information centres and local media on such key

United Nations issues as the Sustainable Development Goals, reaching more than 700 participants. The Department also used WebEx to provide real-time substantive guidance on United Nations issues to public information focal points around the world, including representatives of local media and civil society.

Training

98. With the overall goal of providing field staff with a first-hand opportunity to learn about the latest public information tools and techniques, the Department continued to provide in-person training for its field office staff members. For example, the Department invited staff members from six field offices to assist the social media team during the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda. Given the extra demands placed on staff managing United Nations social media platforms, the six staff members spent 10 days in New York during the General Assembly and the summit. That extra support also helped to augment coverage in languages other than English during that critical time period.

99. In September, in an effort to address region-specific issues, the Department brought together United Nations information centre staff from the Middle East and North Africa region for a training session organized by the Information Centre in Cairo to explore the possibilities of engaging new audiences through social media; to establish a better network and increased cooperation among Arabic-speaking information centres with a view to faster and more comprehensive delivery of United Nations information in Arabic; and to gradually "cross-feed" information with the United Nations country teams in the region, with a particular focus on the Sustainable Development Goals.

100. The Office of Human Resources Management provided the United Nations information centre network with 20 licences to Lynda.com, an online subscription library that provides instruction on the latest software and business skills through instructional videos, for a trial arrangement from 2015 to 2016.

Establishment of an information centre in the Republic of Korea

101. In response to paragraph 39 of General Assembly resolution 70/93 B, on the feasibility of accepting the offer made by the Republic of Korea to host a United Nations information centre, the Department has examined the proposal on the basis of available information and considers that the establishment and operation of such a centre in a cost-effective manner should be possible.

IV. Conclusion

102. The Department will continue to develop, lead and implement communications campaigns on the priority issues identified by Member States, using a range of traditional communications tools and taking advantage of the wide and varied opportunities for interactive outreach that are made possible by social media platforms. The Department will explore new and emerging social media tools and channels as a way to enhance the Organization's presence and ability to spread core United Nations messages globally. It will also continue to use its lead role in the United Nations Communications Group to coordinate messages among the entities of the United Nations system. Specific task forces will continue to be established as

needed on priority issues, and during crisis situations cross-divisional teams will be created in a timely manner to address communications.

103. The Department will continue to develop innovative ways to streamline administration, implement cost-effective ways for Headquarters and field offices to communicate with each other face to face, and improve the delivery of programmes on both digital and traditional platforms and through strengthened partnerships with international and local actors, in particular United Nations country teams.

104. In that context, the Department seeks ways to enhance the role that the United Nations information centres can play by widening and diversifying the programmes and products being offered in support of the Organization's work and various campaigns.